

Message Text

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ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /017 R

DRAFTED BY S/PRS:JMORDWAY:AVW
APPROVED BY S/PRS:JMORDWAY
S/S -O:LRMACFARLANE
-----211603 123091 /41
O 211545Z FEB 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY AIRCRAFT IMMEDIATE

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FOR CARTER FROM S/PRS

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SOPN (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: GWERTZMAN ARTICLE, NYTIMES, 21 FEBRUARY

NO. 31

HEREWITH FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE ENTITLED, "REPORTER'S NOTE-BOOK: VANCE'S STYLE ON MIDEAST TOUR VERY DIFFERENT FROM KISSINGER'S". BEGIN: DAMASCUS - AS SECSTATE WINDS UP HIS QUICK TRIP AROUND ME, ALL RESULTS ARE NOT YET IN, BUT HE WILL PROBABLY RETURN TO WASH HAVING AT LEAST ACHIEVED ONE OF HIS PRINCIPAL AIMS -- INTRODUCING HIMSELF TO ARABS AND ISRAELIS WHOSE DECISIONS WILL ULTIMATELY SHAPE FUTURE OF REGION.

IT HAS NOT BEEN AN EASY JOURNEY. SIX COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN JAMMED INTO SIX DAYS. LITTLE TIME HAS BEEN LEFT FOR SIGHT-SEEING AND BARELY ENOUGH TIME TO GET TO KNOW MAIN ACTORS ON ME SCENE, ALL OF WHOM HAD CLOSE AND HIGHLY PERSONAL RELNS
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WITH KISSINGER. FORMER SECRETARY'S NAME IS NO LONGER MENTIONED IN PUBLIC, BUT HIS UNUSUAL STYLE AND HIS CHARISMA HAVE LEFT THEIR MARK IN ME.

VANCE HAS HAD TO TELL VARIOUS LEADERS THAT HE REMAINS NO LESS DEVOTED TO A MEPEACE THAT WOULD BE FAIR TO ALL PARTIES THAN KISSINGER WAS. BUT VANCE DIPLOMACY WILL CERTAINLY BE

OF A QUITE DIFFERENT CHARACTER. NONE IS THE SENSE OF
DRAMATIC TENSION OF KISSINGER'S DOZEN TRIPS TO REGION,
JUST AS VANCE, IN KEEPING WITH CARTER'S AUSTERITY PROGRAM,
HAS DONE AWAY WITH ARMORED LIMOUSINES THAT USED TO BE
FLOWN AHEAD IN ON AF C-141 TO BE READY WHEN SECRETARY'S
PLANE LANDED.

SECRET SERVICE HAS GIVEN VANCE'S PROTECTION BACK TO STATE
DEPT SECURITY, AND DEPT'S AGENTS DO NOT SEEM OMNIPRESENT,
AS SS WAS. VANCE ALSO IS A DIFFERENT SORT OF PERSON, MORE
USUAL DIPLOMAT OF DEAN RUSK SORT, COMPETENT AND CAUTIOUS,
LOOKING UPON THIS MISSION WITH SERIOUSNESS BUT NOT AS A
CRUSADE.

KISSINGER WAS A SORT OF LATTER-DAY "HENRY OF ARABIA" WHO
SAW HIMSELF AS A CATALYST BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND ARABS, WHO
PERHAPS ROMANTICIZED HIS ROLE AND PERHAPS EXAGGERATED IMPOR-
TANCE OF HIS HIGHLY PERSONALIZED DIPLOMACY.

WITH ISRAELIS, KISSINGER WAS AN INTELLECTUAL, EMOTIONAL JEW
WHO SPOKE ESSENTIALLY SAME WAY AS MANY OF ISRAELIS, WHO
ARGUED, CAJOLED AND INSULTED THEM AT SAME TIME AS HE PER-
SUADED THEM THAT THEY WERE ACTORS ON A CRUCIAL HISTORIC
STAGE.

WITH SADAT OF EGYPT, KISSINGER ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE KISSED
IN PUBLIC AND EMBRACED AS "MY BROTHER", EVEN THOUGH HE
FULLY RECOGNIZED THAT IT WAS A GAME THAT EGYPTIAN WAS
PLAYING TO WIN SUPPORT IN U.S.

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KISSINGER ACTUALLY LIKED ASSAD OF SYRIA BETTER; HE FELT HE
WAS MORE SINCERE, AND HE ENJOYED SYRIAN'S BANTERING ABOUT
WOMEN, RUSSIANS AND OTHER ARAB LEADERS. HIS CONVERSATIONS
WITH ASSAD LASTED FOR HOURS AND OFTEN LEFT KISSINGER
EMOTIONALLY DRAINED.

THROUGH IT ALL KISSINGER INFORMED AND JOKED AND GROUSED
WITH DOZEN OR SO REPORTERS ON HIS PLANE, WHO MADE UP A
KIND OF GREEK CHORUS ECHOING THE MAIN POINTS OF KISSINGER'S
ACHIEVEMENTS AND CALLING OUT HIS FAILURES. ON GROUND,
HUNDREDS OF LOCAL NEWS PEOPLE WERE SUPPORTING PLAYERS,
ADDING BY THEIR WRITING AND PICTURES FURTHER LEGENDS TO
KISSINGEREPIK.

VANCE, IN HIS PIN-STRIPE SUITS, HIS STRAIGHTFORWARD AIR
AND HIS LAWYER'S APPROACH TO PROBLEMS OF ME, DOES NOT WANT
TO BE ANOTHER KISSINGER. AND FOR THOSE WHO KNEW KISSINGER
IN ME THESE ARE DAYS OF NOSTALGIA FOR WHAT ONCE WAS OR

PLEASURE OVER WHAT WILL BE.

FIRST TO MEET NEW SECSTATE WERE ISRAELIS. AND NOT SURPRISINGLY THEY HAD MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT CHANGE. FOR ISRAELIS SEE SOMETHING OF BOTH KISSINGER AND VANCE IN THEMSELVES. PRAGMATIC, ROMATIC SIDE WAS FASCINATED BY KISSINGER. LEGAL, TALMUDIC SIDE FAVORS VANCE.

"VANCE SAT THERE, WITH A NOTEBOOK IN FRONT OF HIM, ASKING QUESTIONS," AN ISRAELI OFFICIAL SAID WEDNESDAY. "HE WAS VERY WELL INFORMED. HIS QUESTIONS WERE PRECISE. SOME PEOPLE, I THINK, WERE A LITTLE BORED BY HIS SCHOOLTEACHER APPROACH. HE WAS VERY CAREFUL NOT TO TELL US WHAT HE THOUGHT. BUT YOU COULD GUESS. FOR INSTANCE, AT ONE POINT HE ASKED, WHAT IF THE PLO CHANGED ITS COVENANT AND ACCEPTED ISRAEL?"

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"THAT'S LIKE POINTING TO A TIGER AND ASKING WHAT IF IT CHANGED TO A DONKEY," WAS ISRAELI RESPONSE TO QUESTION, OFFICIAL SAID. "IT WOULD BE SUCH A SURPRISE THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TALK ABOUT."

ANOTHER FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL SAID, "KISSINGER ALWAYS CRITICIZED US FOR BEING TOO LEGALISTIC, TOO TALMUDIC, BUT I THINK IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT EVERY AGREEMENT WITH ARABS BE VERY PRECISE, AND I THINK THAT VANCE, AS A LAWYER RECOGNIZES THAT AND MAY TURN OUT TO BE A BETTER NEGOTIATOR."

THIS IS VANCE'S FIRST TRIP EVER TO ME, AND HE HAS OBVIOUSLY BEEN ADVISED THAT IN DEALING WITH SUCH LEADERS AS SADAT SOME HYPERBOLE IS IN ORDER. AT THEIR JOINT NEWS CONFERENCE ON THURSDAY, SADAT SAID, AFTER MTG WITH VANCE FOR LESS THAN TWO HOURS, THAT NEW SECRETARY WAS "HONEST, STRAIGHTFORWARD, AND I LIKE TO DEAL WITH HIM."

NEXT DAY VANCE SAID OF SADAT: "I FOUND HIM TO BE A VERY WARM AND INTELLIGENT MAN WHO HAD OBVIOUSLY THOUGHT DEEPLY ABOUT PROBLEMS OF ME AND NEED FOR A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF ME PROBLEM. I FOUND HIM COMPLETELY FRANK AND FORTHCOMING IN ANSWERING ANY QUESTIONS THAT I ASKED OF HIM. AND I CAME AWAY WITH A VERY HIGH REGARD FOR HIM AS A MAN."

FOR AMERICAN REPORTERS TRAVELING WITH VANCE, JURY IS STILL OUT. HE SEEMS RELAXED WITH HIS STAFF AND A BIT SHY WITH PRESS. WHEN KISSINGER TRAVELED, HE IN EFFECT TOOK STATE DEPT WITH HIM AND MADE ALL KEY DECISIONS. THIS PUT A GREAT DEAL OF PRESSURE ON HIS AIDES, AND EMOTIONAL AS HE WAS MOOD OF PLANE WAS OFTEN STORMY.

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VANCE HAS LEFT DEPT IN CONTROL OF HIS SUBORDINATES AND CONCENTRATES ON ME. THIS ALLOWS A MORE EASY AIR.

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KISSINGER ALSO LIKED TO GOSSIP AND CHAT WITH REPORTERS ON PLANE. ALTHOUGH HE ALWAYS REFUSED TO BE IDENTIFIED IN THEIR ARTICLES AS ANYONE OTHER THAN "A SENIOR OFFICIAL," KISSINGER WAS ALWAYS INTERESTING TO LISTEN TO, BECAUSE HE OFTEN SEEMED TO ENJOY SHARING INDISCRETIONS WITH PRESS, SOME INSIGHTS INTO FOIBLES OF PEOPLE HE HAD JUST MET. HE GENERALLY SKETCHED OUT OUTLINES OF POLICY HE WAS TRYING TO FOLLOW, AND EVEN THOUGH HE RARELY PROVIDED DETAILS, HE WAS NEVER DULL.

VANCE SEEMS TO BE FEELING HIS WAY WITH PRESS. HE WANTS TO BE INFORMATIVE, ALTHOUGH HIS NATURE APPEARS TO URGE HIM TO HOLD BACK. AT START OF TRIP LAST MONDAY NIGHT AT ANDREWS AFB, HE WALKED TO REAR OF PLANE AND CHATTED EASILY WITH REPORTERS, BUT HE HAS NOT RETURNED TO PRESS AREA SINCE THEN.

KISSINGER SEEMED ALMOST COMPULSIVE ABOUT TALKING TO REPORTERS, BUT VANCE HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT HE CAN EASILY SURVIVE NOT TALKING TO THEM WHILE AIRBORNE. HE HAS SKIPPED OPPORTUNITY MORE THAN HE HAS TAKEN IT.

NEVERTHELESS, VANCE HAS PARTICIPATED IN ON THE RECORD NEWS CONFERENCES IN JERUSALEM, CAIRO AND HERE, WHICH IS MORE THAN KISSINGER USUALLY DID. VANCE AND HIS SPOKESMAN, HODDING CARTER, ARE TRYING TO FIND A FORMULA TO MEET REPORTERS' NEEDS AND VANCE'S PREFERENCES.

ON FRIDAY, FOR INSTANCE, HE HAD AN ON THE RECORD SESSION ON PLANE, AND YESTERDAY HE FOLLOWED KISSINGER'S EXAMPLE AND SPOKE ONLY ON A BACKGROUND BASIS. VANCE TRIED TO PERSUADE REPORTERS TO USE SOME ATTRIBUTION OTHER THAN "SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL" THAT KISSINGER USED IN HIS BACKGROUND BRIEFINGS AND THAT BECAME A TERM OF DERISION AMONG HIS CRITICS.

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IT IS A DIFFICULT POLICY, BECAUSE WHILE ON THE RECORD
ATTRIBUTION SEEMS BEST SINCE IT TELLS READER IMMEDIATELY
WHO IS SAYING WHAT, IT IS ALSO INHIBITING TO MANY OFFICIALS
WHO MIGHT SAY MORE IF THEY DO NOT HAVE TO DEFEND EVERY
WORD.

CARTER SAYS THAT VANCE WILL PICK AND CHOOSE AND TEST HIS
WAY. HE WILL GIVE INTERVIEWS, ON THE RECORD NEWS CONFER-
ENCES AND BACKGROUND SESSIONS, AND THAT HE DOES NOT WANT TO
BE FORCED INTO RIGID PRACTICE EARLY IN ADMINISTRATION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, PRESS COMMENTS, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 21-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 784bf2c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PRS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3270142
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GWERTZMAN ARTICLE, NYTIMES, 21 FEBRUARY NO. 31 HERewith FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE ENTITLED, 'REPORTER'
TAGS: SOPN, US, XF, NEW YORK TIMES, (VANCE, CYRUS R)
To: SECRETARY AIRCRAFT
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/784bf2c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009